

Stockton Unitarians



Nor will I then thy modest grace forget, Chaste Snow-drop,
venturous harbinger of Spring, *William Wordsworth*
from 'To a Snow-Drop' (1770-1850)

Church News

February 2022



Good morning little snowdrop

As winter fades above you,
Your crown pokes through the ground;
You tentatively peep and take
A regal look around.

*Good morning little snowdrop, so full of hope and grace.
How wonderful to welcome your gentle smiling face.*

You stretch to reach the sunlight
With a gracious, sylphlike yawn.
Your confidence is growing;
Hope of spring begins to dawn.

*Good afternoon young snowdrop, so full of peace and love
How wonderful to welcome you to the world above.*

The snow has disappeared,
And winter turns and leaves.
You wave farewell revealing
Your long and slender sleeves.

*Good day my little snowdrop, so delicate and fine
How wonderful to welcome you into this heart of mine.*

You sway in celebration,
Lightly dancing in the breeze.
The weather has a delicate
And sudden tiny sneeze.

*Good evening humble snowdrop; I'm so pleased that you're here.
You bring a breath of life to the beginning of the year.*

Angela





Gandhi wrote “Honest differences are often a healthy sign of progress.”

When everyone agrees on a matter you must be watchful and alert. It could represent no growth, because people may agree just to stay in their comfort zone to avoid having to make a change. But, no change means no progress. It is when people are honest and speak their minds that improvement can be reached. Adjustments have to be made time to time, so let your voice be heard and take the time to hear others.

Margaret Robinson, Jean Watson and myself chatted at coffee morning and would like to share with you some questions and thoughts on growing our church community.

Are we only talking about Sunday services, or are we considering the whole community of our church?

What do we do now to help achieve growth?

What are we prepared to do over and above what we do now?

Are we expecting others to solve the problem for us?

Do our services appeal to a wide cross-section of the community?

What are our strengths?

1. Our building is an attractive, warm, accessible space catering for disabled and able-bodied people.
2. It is the only church in the area, situated within the local community.
3. It is easily reached, we have parking spaces.
4. We have an active worship team who organise services and arrange service takers.
5. We have a regular group of eight people who meet once a fortnight for Knit 'n' Natter.
6. We have an Engagement group of seven people who meet on Zoom once a month.
7. We are registered for same-sex weddings.

What are our weaknesses?

1. We are an elderly congregation who don't live in Stockton.

2. We have no minister, so no pastoral care.
3. We have very little contact with the local community.
4. The worship area is small and restricted to 40 people, which could affect the use of the building for weddings, funerals and child naming ceremonies.
5. We are not good at conveying what Unitarianism is all about.

What opportunities do we have?

We have a building which is part of a mixed aged community, with a school opposite.

Threats

1. The age of the members.
2. Public transport is not good on a Sunday.
3. We have no young people actively involved in church life.

We hope these statements will help people formulate thoughts for our meeting.

Margaret Whitham

We will be arranging a meeting or meetings shortly, to discuss the FUTURE of Stockton Unitarian Church. If you are unable to attend, please let us have your thoughts either by email, post or phone.

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Address: Stockton Unitarian Church, Wellington Street,
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Telephone: 01642 782219 **email:** mail@stocktonunitarians.org.uk

website: www.stocktonunitarians.org.uk

facebook: Unitarians in and around Stockton-on-Tees

Chair and Flower Secretary: Jean Watson - telephone: 01642 658376

Margaret Robinson - Secretary and Church News Editor
telephone: 01642 782219 email: margaretrobinson81@gmail.com

3 Castle Dyke Wynd, Minerva Mews, Yarm, TS15 9DE

'Instructions for Life'

1.

Take into account that great love and great achievements involve great risks.

2.

When you lose, don't lose the lesson.

3.

Follow the three R's: Respect for self, Respect for others,
Responsibility for all your actions.

4.

Remember that not getting what you want
is sometimes a wonderful stroke of luck.

5.

Learn the rules so you know how to break them properly.

6.

Don't let a little dispute injure a great friendship.

7.

When you realise you've made a mistake, take immediate steps to correct it.

8.

Spend some time alone every day.

9.

Open your arms to change, but don't let go of your values.

10.

Remember that silence is sometimes the best answer.

11.

Live a good, honourable life - then when you get older and think back,
you'll be able to enjoy it for the second time.

12.

A loving atmosphere in your home is the foundation for your happiness.

13.

In disagreements with loved ones, deal only with the current situation.
Don't bring up the past.

14.

Share your knowledge. It's a way you achieve immortality.

15.

BE GENTLE WITH THE EARTH

16.

Once a year, go someplace you've never been before.

17.

Remember that the best relationship is one in which your love for each other
exceeds your need for each other.

18.

Judge success by what you had to give up in order to get it.

19.

Approach love and cooking with reckless abandon.

The Dalai Lama 2000



[Rāj Ghāt](#) Memorial to Mahatma Gandhi in New Delhi.

Photograph above by David Warhurst

Gandhi's Quotes

These quotations and photograph above, were used in the service on 30th January 2022 led by Hazel and David Warhurst

- 1. "Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony"***

Happiness is a feeling achieved by thinking positive thoughts, saying positive things, and doing the things that are positive for you as well as for the others. Thinking negative thoughts, saying negative things, and doing the things that are negative for others won't lead you towards a happy life. True happiness comes from harmony.

2. *"The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong"*

The one who forgives, or who understands the true meaning of forgiveness, shall be considered a strong individual. On the other hand, the one who doesn't forgive or doesn't understand the true meaning of forgiveness shall be considered a weak individual.

Gandhi's message makes a lot of sense. There is no ultimatum with this statement- simply a call to be big enough to forgive the actions of others.

3. *"Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever."*

Seize the moment, live without regrets, and do what you have to do. Don't postpone things until tomorrow, because tomorrow might not come. Be a lifelong learner because it is never too late to learn. There is always something new being discovered that can change your perspective on things, so keep an open mind.

4. *"Honest differences are often a healthy sign of progress."*

When everyone agrees on a matter you must be watchful and alert. It could represent no growth, because people may agree just to stay in their comfort zone to avoid having to make a change. But, no change means no progress. It is when people are honest and speak their minds that improvement can be reached. Adjustments have to be made time to time, so let your voice be heard and take the time to hear others.

5. *"Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will"*

True strength is not the result of physical training and capacity. It is measured by the will to work and overcome all the obstacles in life. If you truly believe you can achieve something, then you will be able to achieve it, and that will be your biggest and truest strength.

6. *"An eye for an eye only ends up making the whole world blind"*

Gandhi is referring to violence here. If we react to violent behaviour with more violence, there will be no difference between us and the person who initiated the violence.

The same can be said for abusive verbal behaviour. If someone says something offensive and you retaliate in a similar manner, there will be no difference between you and him.

7. *"The earth has enough to satisfy every man's needs, but not enough for every man's greed."*

We read this in a carriage during a ride on Kolkata's - at that time - new underground. Gandhi was pointing out that there are enough natural resources and ways of providing food so no-one should go hungry or be starving in today's world. Sadly the greed over land acquisition and domination of the poor has had a catastrophic effect in some countries.

There are many, many more sayings and quotations attributed to Gandhi but we'll end with these four, and I'm sure you can put your own interpretation on them.

"The greatness of humanity is not in being human, but in being humane."

"In a gentle way, you can shake the world."

"Change yourself – you are in control."

"I will not let anyone walk through my mind with their dirty feet."

Hazel & David Warhurst

Other services in January and February 2022

January 16th Rev Paul Walker "Blue Monday"

January 23rd Rev Margaret Kirk "The times are a changing"

February 6th Rev Paul Walker "The Quest for the Historical Jesus"

February 13th Diana Bebbly "Love", Diana's service looked at love in four parts Romance, Ourselves, Enemies and Life and God. The reading and hymns were well chosen to complement the theme. Those present in the chapel received a rose bud from Diana and those on Zoom had a virtual rose. "May you be happy, may you be healthy, may you live with ease."

February 20th Louise Reeve "Ministry of Cake"

Service for March and April 2022

Date	Time	Worship Leader	Flowers
March 6th	11.00am	Rev Paul Walker	Flower Fund
March 13th	6.00pm	Rev Victor Ball	Margaret Kirk
March 20th	6.00pm	Membership service	Hazel & David Warhurst
March 27th	6.00pm	Rev Margaret Kirk Mothering Sunday	Mrs Josie Squires
April 3rd	6.00pm	Christine Walker	Mrs Jane Tomlin
April 10th	6.00pm	tba	Mrs Coates
April 17th	6.00pm	Rev Victor Ball	Hazel & David Warhurst
April 24th	6.00pm	Rev Margaret Kirk	Margaret Kirk

Please note all services will be held in the church building. Most services will also be transmitted via Zoom, in a hybrid service. Joining instructions for Zoom will be sent out through email by the Church Secretary

margaretrobinson81@gmail.com

Dates for your Diary

Knit 'n' Natter Group meet on Tuesdays 11.00am to 1,00pm on alternative Tuesdays. 8th and 22nd March 2022.

Bring along your knitting, crochet, crafts and enjoy a cup of tea a chat whilst you work. £1 contribution for the tea/coffee and biscuits.



Coffee Mornings every Saturday

10.00am to 11.30am

Come and enjoy a cup of tea or coffee and biscuits with good conversation with friendly and welcoming company

UNITARIAN ANNUAL MEETINGS 2022



**A time to be together in person,
reconnecting with spiritual friends
and making new connections
for the journey ahead.**

Our 2022 Annual Meetings will be like no other,
after so much time of being apart. Join us for
community building, spiritual nourishment,
learning, inspiration and togetherness.

We will eat, talk, worship, sing, pray, celebrate,
reflect, laugh, and make decisions for our
collective future.

19-21.4.2022
BIRMINGHAM
HILTON METROPOLE
unitarian.org.uk/annualmeetings

The General Assembly of Unitarian and
Free Christian Churches
Registered Charity No. 250788

The General Assembly of
Unitarian and Free
Christian Churches
Annual Meetings Tuesday
19th to Thursday 21st
April 2022.

Paul Walker is attending
these meetings as
Stockton's delegate. He will
be voting on behalf of
Stockton Unitarian Church
members for or against
these Motions. When the
Church Secretary receives
the Motions, church
members will receive them,
and they will be discussed
to give Paul guidance as how
we would like him to vote on
our behalf.

Unitarian Women's Group (UWG) Conference 21ST TO 23RD OCTOBER 2022

The Nightingale Centre, Great Hucklow

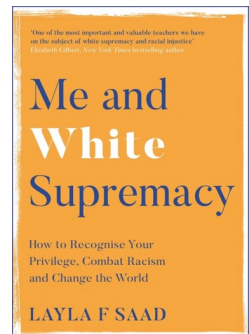
WO(ME)N & WHITE SUPREMACY



Danielle Wilson is the
Conference Facilitator

To book contact :
margaretrobinson81@gmail.com

She is also leading a session on
this topic at the GA Meetings in
April 2022



Uni-sing! A Zoom hymn singing group, on alternative **Saturday** afternoons at 3.00pm with break out groups for chat in the middle. for more information email Louise Rogers louise.rogers256@gmail.com see facebook.co/groups/687366168770017 Sessions in **March 5th** 'Gratitude and Praise" and **12th March** with Margaret Whitham and Lesley McKeown

NUF (National Unitarian Fellowship)

The nationwide Unitarian network for anyone, whether part of a church or not, exchange opinions, news and ideas nufonline.org.uk

Unitarian and Free Christian Bible Discussion Group

meet on Zoom on **Mondays** at 6.30pm
unitarian.org.uk/events/bible-discussion-group/

Unitarian Transformers meet on various evenings, offering a programme of spirituality and education, building community, supporting and encouraging new and existing Unitarian Fellowships through Heart and Soul gatherings, meditation sessions and online discussions.
unitariantransformers.org.uk to find out more

UMS (Unitarian Music Society)

Virtual Conference Saturday 19th March 2022 on Zoom email unitarianmusicsociety@hotmail.com for link.
UMS Summer Conference 12th to 15th August 2022 at The Nightingale Centre, Great Hucklow, Derbyshire with Oliver's Journey Home World premiere at Ilkley on Sunday 14th August



Deadline for next edition of Stockton Church News - Sunday 20th March 2022. Please send your contributions for the April edition to the Editor Margaret Robinson at margaretrobinson81@gmail.com

Foy Conference 2022

Friday 29th April to Monday 2nd May 2022
at The Nightingale Centre, Great Hucklow
run by The Foy Society, open to all

Programme Co-ordinator: Rev Winnie Gordon
Conference Secretary: Joan Partington,
coljopartington@gmail.com

***In search of truth and justice:
a spotlight on institutional racism in
Britain***



George Floyd's death in 2020 in Minneapolis aroused many more people in Britain to the endemic realities of racism. But there remains a long way to go. Comparisons between British racism and American racism are neither unwarranted nor ill-judged. The number of Blue on Black incidents is most telling, the lack of prosecution revealing. Trust in the police, in systems, in churches, by ethnic minorities remains suspicious and is low. Injustice, discrimination, imprisonment, and death does happen here!

So that the truth may be revealed, and a worthier Britain prevail, the conference will share information on:

Blue on Black asphyxiation

Disproportionate stop and search

Discrimination in investigation and representation

Identity, police formation and unconscious/conscious bias

*And touches on the pervasive structural, white-centred culture
on the inclusivity of People
of Colour in Unitarian
community.*

